

Michael Roesslein:

And we are recording with this episode of Rebel Health Spotlight. I am here with a familiar face for a lot of you, probably, Dr. Maya Shetreat. Dr. Maya, thank you for being here.

Maya Shetreat:

Thank you for having me.

Michael Roesslein:

Yeah, it's always super fun when we get to connect. And not only when we record, but the great conversations we have before and after. So we just had, basically, a full behind the scenes podcast and now we're going to record this for you. And so Dr. Maya is one of my best friends in the industry and somebody who's been on with us quite a few times. And like myself, has shifted focus ... I don't know if focus is the right word. But intention, focus in your work, a lot, but not really. I think it's been different iterations of a very similar energy and mission and uncovering, I guess, of where you're headed.

But I'd love for people to get to know more about you and your work currently and how they can connect with you. So my first question would be just share a little bit about yourself and your background. I know where you started and I know where you are now. So the abbreviated version on how you got from A to B is a really fascinating story, and I think a lot of people would like to know.

Maya Shetreat:

Sure. Well, so I am someone who believes that we can inhabit many identities in the same time, and our society doesn't usually encourage that, I think. We're supposed to be a ... people say, "What do you do?" And you come up with your one answer that's simple and people can wrap their head around it. And that answer for me had been an adult and pediatric neurologist, or an integrative neurologist. And that's what I did primarily for many, many, many years. But I'm an adult and pediatric neurologist, and I also listen and talk to plants. I am someone who loves the mitochondria and the microbiome, and also plays with mycelium and works and teaches around master plants and psychedelics.

So I'm an herbalist, I'm an urban farmer, I'm a forager, I'm a ceremonialist. And I wrote a book called *The Dirt Cure*, which came out in 2016. And I just wrote a book called *The Master Plant Experience: The Science, Safety, and Sacred Ceremony of Psychedelics*. And in fact, I do very much believe that my work is exactly the same thing, which is really that we are not in an us versus them world, but in a me and we world, if we want it to. If we acknowledge that we're always in conversation with our inner selves, with our outer selves, with the world around us, and that's what makes us who we are. And that's basically what I do with every project that I work on.

So now I am ... let's see. I'm trying to think of how people can understand what I'm working on right now. One of the things that I'm doing is starting a certification for psychedelic informed professionals. And we can unpack that a little bit, but it is very, very different, I think, than other kinds of trainings that are out there. It's not just for people who want to actually sit or be guides, but in fact, for people who want to be informed, like first responders and doctors and lawyers and pastors and other people who want to come with a combination of modern science, quantum science, Indigenous science ... which, yes, Indigenous science is very much real. Very much a thing. And ceremony and practice. So that's one thing that I'm sharing and making available.

I've also started ... or created a vibrational psychedelic master plant product, which are called quantum drops. They have really impressed me with the testimonials that people are bringing in. It's a long story how I got there, but I grow master plants. That's part of how I am in service to them. I don't consume my plants, I just tend them. And together, me and the plants created this ceremony in a bottle, as we call it. And there are people around the world now,

doctors, therapists, and others who have been working with them. And just the stories, which I can share one or two, have been really amazing.

And I also do microdosing coaching and work with people in a limited way, one-on-one. And that's a lot of where my heart is. I actually also bring in other cosmologies and languages when I work with people. So I look at science, physical, mental, emotional, spiritual, and bring in everything from science and medicine to spiritual practice, to astrology, ancient astrology when I am looking through a lens at someone who's in transformation.

Michael Roesslein:

Thank you. And I think that was the most interesting response to that question that I've yet received. That is a very wide range of extremely interrelated things that may not seem super interrelated to first glance. I always enjoy the conversations with ... well, I enjoy all conversations I get to have here. But I especially resonate with the conversations with people who also like to blur the lines around what is healing work or what is health or what is wellness. Whereas there's the ... you come from a really structured conventional medicine side around the neurology. Then landed in the functional medicine space, but that's still on that physiology side. And the western science functional medicine still relies largely on western science and constructs, and it's mostly physical.

And then the other side, when you're talking about Indigenous and master plants and psychedelics and emotional and spiritual and connections to the earth and to the plants and to these traditions and ritual and culture and ceremony, that's a different side. At least in this construct I'm describing, of healing or transformation or wellness or health. And I don't often get to talk to people who make such a blurry mess of those lines. And so thank you for doing that and for dragging a lot of other people into that blurred mixture and concoction. And questioning, what is health and what is wellness and where does it come from and how do we create it? And how has it been created forever?

I like your mention of that. And how it's been created forever is not how it's currently being largely pushed and created. So I guess my quick follow up to that is, were you always interested in that side of things? The spiritual, the plants, the earth, the traditions, the ceremony, the ritual, all of that side when you were becoming a neurologist? Or was there a transformational event? Or how did that ... what happened?

Maya Shetreat:

I think I will say ... answer your question by saying, yes. And yes means yes to all of that. I think we all have inklings. And actually I want to just say, to your point about functional medicine, I am just preparing a talk right now, in fact, about the mystical experience and psychedelics for the Thought Leaders consortium that Jeff Bland ... who is one of the fathers, probably we could say, of functional medicine. Has invited me to give. So I am bringing this into the belly of the beast, in a sense, and with their say-so.

I think there's been a mentality that is very ... there's a fear-based mentality, particularly in the older generations in medicine, of wanting to fit in and be normal. And those of us who are not interested in fitting in and being normal, we can blow that up a little bit. Or disrupt that, is maybe a better way to say it. So I'm very comfortable disrupting that conversation.

Michael Roesslein:

I think that's an understatement.

Maya Shetreat:

It's scary. I have to push my boundaries a lot. It takes courage. I know though-

Michael Roesslein:

I want to acknowledge that. Hold on, I want to acknowledge that. Because I tend to do similar things. And people always make comments about how ... "Oh, you don't have any fear." I can't speak for everyone, I'll just speak for the two of us. Yes, we do. And yes, things are uncomfortable. And yes, there's times where I'm like, holy shit. Should I actually do that or should I be saying that? Or what's going to happen when I do this? And doubts of, this isn't going to be well received, or this is going to be ... I can't even imagine transitioning from a neurologist world to doing some of the things that were your steps towards this. And how is this going to be received by my peers, by my colleagues, by this?

So it's not an absence of fear. It's taking action with fear being there and allowing that, right?

Maya Shetreat:

Yeah, absolutely. I mean, I know. For example, I post pretty actively in my Instagram stories. I'm finding my way back after the pandemic when I just had to get off social media almost entirely, finding my way back to really posting very actively. But I'm always in my stories and every day when I post ... not every day, but many days. Whatever I post, I'm in so much discomfort I want to delete it. And people don't have any idea that I feel that way, but it's like, I want to share things really vulnerably and be really curious and explore things that we're all facing in the world.

And yeah, it does. It takes courage. I've learned that the more uncomfortable I am when I post something, the more important it probably is that I post it. So it's unlearning this idea that I should feel comfortable a lot, which is what I like. It's certainly what I would in theory prefer. And really chasing the things that make me uncomfortable, to a great extent, that tell me I'm going in the right direction. But not without fear.

Michael Roesslein:

I think that's an important thing for people to hear, because I think that we're very discomfort-averse, as a culture. And that stepping into things that are uncomfortable initially and sharing ... I'm not on Instagram a lot anymore, but I do see your stories and I enjoy them. And I can tell that they're very genuine and that this is very who I am. This is what I am. This is not some polished bullshit that we put up on social media, which is most of the reason I'm not on Instagram that much, but it is sharing from that vulnerable place. People resonate with it because it's sharing the experience that they also have and that they can feel and that they can identify with. And it's a lot of courage to do that. And then it gives other people courage to do it and lets people see, "Hey, I can do this too. And I can open myself up and be vulnerable and be real." So thank you.

And thank you for creating the training that you're working on that we talked about a little bit before, for psychedelic informed practitioners. I'd like to know ... if people want to find out more. You mentioned your two books. You have *The Dirt Cure* and *Master Plants*. What's the full name of ... you have it there? Yes. *The Master Plant Experience: The Science, Safety, and Sacred Ceremony of Psychedelics*. Is there one place where people can go to find all of your things?

Maya Shetreat:

Yes. You can go to my website, which is Dr Maya, D-R-M-A-Y-A.com. And you can find quantum drops there, although there's also just quantumdrops.com to find those. But all of my trainings and all of my books, et cetera, and my mini courses that I do and a lot of free resources are all on my website.

Michael Roesslein:

Yeah, you've generously share lots of free stuff too. And so go there, check it out. We'll link it below. We'll also link your Instagram. For people listening and not clickable right now, what is your Instagram handle?

Maya Shetreat:

It's Dr. Maya Shetreat. She and treat, like the words, she and treat, put together. So Dr. Maya Shetreat.

Michael Roesslein:

Okay, great content there. I want to hear a little bit more about the drops. You mentioned you could share a couple anecdotal stories. I've been getting your emails about them, which are very well written, and I am intrigued. I am admittedly a huge ... I'll use the word novice, to be polite to myself. When it comes to anything on the homeopathic spectrum or anything that's on that type of ... I don't know anything about homeopathics. And that is not to say that I don't believe in the potency or the effectiveness of certain homeopathic medicines. That's a whole different other topic and argument with various groups and organizations.

But I don't know what the hell I'm talking about right now. So I'd like to be educated a little bit on what you've created. And I love that you mentioned that you created them with the plants. And so if you could share just a little bit about that creation process and what they are and a couple of stories, that'd be great.

Maya Shetreat:

Of course. So little did I ever expect that I would be creating a vibrational psychedelic master plant medicine of any kind. Not what I anticipated, but life has a way of taking us on lots of twists and turns in the journey. And one day when I was tending my plants ... and I have my own ayahuasca vine that is over 10 years old. I have a array-

Michael Roesslein:

It'll grow in New York? It survives the winter?

Maya Shetreat:

I grow inside. Inside.

Michael Roesslein:

Oh, okay.

Maya Shetreat:

She has her own tree to grow up because she gets very pouty, essentially, if she doesn't have a live plant, big plant. So we have a giant tree. Luckily I have high ceilings. And I grow many San Pedro cacti. I have brugmansia, I have tobacco. I grow a lot of different master plants. I said before that my relationship with them is not so much to consume them in this way, but to tend them. And one day I was tending them and I heard in this very clear way, "Why do people think they need to consume us in order to experience our medicine? Show them another way." That was years ago. I was a little gobsmacked and not at all sure ... although I have in my practice over the years. I've prescribed homeopathy, I've worked with flower essences. I think they are potent when prescribed and offered in the right way, in the right circumstances.

But I really didn't know what this was. It's not homeopathy. It doesn't start with any plant matter. Which homeopathy, in theory, although it's an energetic imprint, does start with at least something. These were made with the plant, in ceremony, with medicine songs that the plants gave me. And with music of the plants that measures the oscillations of the plant into music. And so we have a whole process at certain times of week, year, month.

Michael Roesslein:

That's cool.

Maya Shetreat:

And the plants sometimes show me when to make it, because let's say they burst into flower, right? There can be a moment, like right now, in fact, I have several brugmansia bushes ... which, P.S., are very potent psychedelics, but also potentially very poisonous and deadly. This is a way working with them vibrationally to experience some of their transmissions, but without being in any danger, let's say, of dosing yourself in a way that would be ... it's not something I would recommend any person ever consume, really, actually. Only the most trained people work with that kind of medicine in a large way, and only then very carefully.

But all of this to say, creating these, what we call ceremony in a bottle, has been a really, really fascinating experience, and actually has precedent in Indigenous ceremony. For example, people who are ayahuasqueros, who administer ayahuasca ... which a lot of people may know is a particularly popular kind of psychedelic master plant at this time. They sing icaros, which are these songs, these medicine songs. And the icaros are actually considered to be not ... they're considered to be equal in potency to drinking ayahuasca brew. They are considered to be vibrational transmissions from the plants. And my teachers, in some cases, didn't even give people ayahuasca brew to drink, but would only drink a little themselves and sing the icaros. And people would be having ceremony and crying and vomiting and having the whole journey through the icaros.

So vibrational transmissions from the plants are very much a part of the Indigenous experience. And any teacher that I've had also that was Indigenous would always ... they'd hear about compounds. "Compounds." Like, "No, there are no compounds. These are the spirits of the plant." That there is this essence, that they think the whole idea of compounds and neurotransmitters and tools and this kind of idea is absurd and that we're missing the whole point. So it's been a really interesting journey for me. Even though I was already a very open-minded, I think, practitioner and person, it's taken me to more uncomfortable places on the theme that we've discussed.

And I'll tell you a story that just happened, actually last week. Which was, there was a doctor that I met and he was interested in the quantum drops. And we were chatting at this conference and he said, "Well, I don't get it, but I'm going to try it because I like you. I think you're interesting." And I'm like, "Well, okay. We just talked about this for an hour, so I feel like you do know. But okay." And then I see him the next day ... he bought some and he took them home. And he said, "Oh, I took some last night and I took some this morning. And I don't really know if it did anything, but I feel really good and I'm meeting interesting people, so that's great."

And I was like, "Okay." And he said, "Oh, and the other thing. I took out a picture of my father this morning. And he passed away a long time ago, and I built an altar and I bowed down and I prayed to him." And I was like, "Oh. Is that something you've done before?" And he said, "No, I've never done that." But he said, "I'm Chinese and this is part of my culture, that my people do that. We build altars and we worship our deceased loved ones, our ancestors." And I said, "No, I'm not knocking it." In fact, I was like, "I have altars all over my house, in fact." But I was like, "So do you have an altar in your home?" And he said, "No, I don't have anything Chinese in my home at all. But I just woke up and I wanted to build this altar to my father and pray to him. And I just felt really connected to my lineage." So I was like, "That might be part of how you're noticing the effects of the quantum drops."

So that was one very recent story. Another one was actually with another doctor. Not that only I hear these things from doctors, but doctors we know tend to be a little more skeptical than the average bear. This doctor was interviewing me, actually much as we are now. And before we got on, he said, "Maya, I have to tell you something." He said, "I've been dancing every day." And I was like, "Oh, that's amazing." He said, "No, you don't understand. I get up, I don't shower, I don't get coffee, I don't get dressed. I just put on music and I start dancing." He's like, "It's just the last few weeks." And I was like, "That sounds awesome." He said, "Well, I didn't know why it was happening. And then I realized I started taking the children every day." The children is one of our drops. We have the grandmother, the grandfather, and the children. He said, "I've been taking the children every day. And I realized that was when I started dancing, when I looked back at when it started."

And that's very in line with this idea of connecting to inner child and doing that kind of work of finding your playfulness and your lightness. And so it's been ... I've heard lots of other kinds of stories. These are just two recent and remarkable ones.

Michael Roesslein:

Wow, that's really cool. Thank you. And I'm curious, are the children mushroom related?

Maya Shetreat:

They are.

Michael Roesslein:

Okay. That's what I figured. Really interesting. Maybe I should have some shipped to California for my next visit. Getting things here ... people warned me when I moved over here that it's difficult to get stuff shipped here regarding tincture, supplement, all that. It's literally impossible. So we'll have to connect offline and I should have some shipped to-

Maya Shetreat:

Yeah. I mean, we do ship all over the world. And so far to Europe, to the Philippines, to Australia. But I don't know if Italy is its own entity in that regard.

Michael Roesslein:

There's a wasteland of boxes sitting somewhere in Italy that have never been delivered to people from that type of stuff. That's really interesting and subtle. In the subtle work I've done with plant medicines and psychedelics, I've encountered a lot of those similar stories too. That are like, I'm not sure if it's this, but then this happened, or this happened, or this thing. And for me, I've noticed ... and I love that you mentioned that the Indigenous will say that it's the spirits of the plants, not these compounds. Because I have quite a bit of experience with plant-based psychedelics and plant medicines. And these are conscious things. These are not like you take a Tylenol and your pain goes away.

It's in the right setting and when you're open to the communication, this is like having something larger and more intelligent than you in the room. And unique plant to plant as well. Very unique. And personality wise ... I don't want to use the word personality. But essence wise and means of communication wise, they don't have those nicknames of grandmother and grandfather and mother and children for no reason. It's interesting.

Maya Shetreat:

Yeah. And that's why I called the book *The Master Plant Experience*, because master plant ... and I certainly in no way speak for all Indigenous people. No one could. But what many different Indigenous communities have in common is they understand that these are masters. And they are teachers and transmitters of ancient wisdom that we need to shift our consciousness and change our behavior so we can human better, essentially. This is not an easy task that we have here.

Michael Roesslein:

We're not humaning very well right now, collectively. So humaning better would be a very valuable thing to learn. I'm curious, speaking of humaning better, if ... we're at about time. If you can leave us with one or two either practices or ... I don't know. Suggestions, tips, recommendations, practices. If somebody wants to shift the needle, or maybe disrupt their own patterns or flow or whatever. As we described it earlier, how we like to disrupt things. So just a couple of simple practices that are either earth-based or ritual based or ceremony based that you'd like to share.

Maya Shetreat:

Well, gosh. I'll say a few, quickly. They might be a little more simplistic sounding, but I think these move the needle for me in some unexpected ways. So for me, it's all about how do I bring the extraordinary into the ordinary? So that's part of what my rituals and my practices are built to hold and invite in. One of the things that I really am a big fan of is just diving into your imagination, which I call Make Bad Art™. And Make Bad Art™ is like, you don't have to know what you're doing. You don't have to make something pretty. You don't have to make something Instagramable. You literally take art supplies as if you're a second-grader, literally, and just give yourself time.

I used to do it on a weekend morning. I would just get up and that would be what I'd do. I would paint. And some things I actually painted were really cool, and some were not impressive to me whatsoever. And it really didn't matter because it was a very opening, important practice for me. And I think my belief is we know everything that wants to be here and is here, but we have to tap into it. And we've been taught imagination is the opposite of real, but actually it might be more real. So tapping into that is one big thing.

I actually think finding physical touch, just hugging people, holding somebody's hand. Very, very simple. It doesn't have to be anything dramatic. You and I were talking about if we're lucky enough to find somebody who can actually offer a massage or some kind of touch therapy. I think touch is incredibly underrated. It's probably far more healing than anyone really wants to admit or realize, other than obviously people who do that for a living.

The last thing is just random acts of kindness. So whenever I can, if I see any opportunity or I can invent an opportunity, I just try to come up with little creative ways to show kindness to people. And they're the best I can do, right? It's not probably the most amazing, most wonderful, most kind thing, but I think doing that, it opens this flow state. And it's one of those things that's ... I love things that are win-win-win. Everybody wins. And random act of kindness, you do something for somebody else, so that's a win. And you get to feel so lovely and in flow. And so those are just some simple thoughts.

Michael Roesslein:

Simple but effective. And I like it because it's a theme in that question on these interviews has been something ... almost all of my guests have prefaced their answer with, "This is going to sound overly simple, but ..." And it's things like getting outside, getting your feet in the dirt, to doing acts of kindness, making ... I like that. Making bad art. Like any art that I've ever made. But it allows the expression to come forward and so it doesn't stay bottled up.

So thank you for sharing that and for all the beautiful work that you're doing and things that you're disrupting, and for sharing it so openly and vulnerably with the world. It's a real gift, and I hope to potentially collaborate with you on some of it and we can disrupt things together. I think it'd be a lot of fun. And yeah, just thanks for everything.

Maya Shetreat:

Thank you. It's nice to have partners in this.

Michael Roesslein:

All right.